

ARTICLE APPEARED  
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8 September 1983**JACK ANDERSON****Report Bares  
NATO Forces'  
Deficiencies**

There is more to the great missile controversy, now under discussion in Geneva, than has been reported.

The decision to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles in western Europe not only shook up the Kremlin, which launched a massive propaganda campaign against it, but alarmed many Europeans who see the deployment as a dangerous escalation in the terrifying game of showdown.

Why did NATO decide it had to modernize its nuclear forces despite the high risk of political backlash? The explanations are found in classified documents, which my associate Dale Van Atta has reviewed.

A top-secret State Department report, for example, describes the deficiencies of the NATO forces now in place. Of the 72 Pershing 1A missile launchers in Germany, the report complains:

"The Pershing missile system has been in the inventory for a long time and is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. The system is manpower-intensive as presently configured. The accuracy and yields of available warheads make them un-

suitable for some limited attacks. The missile range is insufficient to place targets in the Soviet Union at risk."

NATO wants to deploy 572 Pershing II and cruise missiles in western Europe to offset what is perceived to be a Soviet advantage. Of urgent concern to the West are approximately 250 SS20 mobile missiles that the Soviets have trained on Europe. Each of these awesome missiles can fire three warheads.

The United States also has more than 600 bombers in Europe. But they face more than 900 Soviet Badgers, Blinders and Backfires. Cautions the top-secret report:

"While dual-capable aircraft are a valuable and versatile element of NATO's forces, all the land-based aircraft, except the F111, lack the range to threaten credibly strategic targets in the Soviet Union."

The report describes the submarine-launched Poseidon and Polaris missiles assigned to NATO as "the most survivable systems available to NATO." But the report warns that they "are generally regarded as 'strategic' systems whose use prior to General Nuclear Response might convey an overly escalatory signal to the Soviet Union."

There are also problems with "yields and accuracy" that make the submarine missiles "unsuitable for many of the desired targets." In other words, NATO has a choice be-

tween inadequate weapons that would be an ineffective deterrent and apocalyptic weapons that could turn a "limited nuclear war" in Europe into a global holocaust.

Footnote: A worried Yuri V. Andropov suddenly offered to scrap enough Soviet medium-range missiles in Europe, including SS20s, to bring the total down to the number of British and French missiles—if the United States will change its plan to deploy the Pershing II and cruise missiles.